

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A computer-implemented method for retrieving information from a knowledge base, the method comprising:

5 building a search request that contains a search query and a pattern having a set of attributes; and

using the search request to retrieve information from the knowledge base, wherein the retrieved information contains information associated with the search query, and wherein the retrieved information is also associated with the set of attributes contained in the pattern.

10 2. The computer-implemented method of claim 1, wherein the search query is input by a user.

3. The computer-implemented method of claim 1, wherein the method comprises:

15 using the search request to retrieve information from the knowledge base using a search index.

4. The computer-implemented method of claim 1, wherein the search query includes knowledge base search terms.

20 5. The computer-implemented method of claim 4, wherein the knowledge base search terms contain textual search terms.

6. The computer-implemented method of claim 1, wherein the pattern is associated with a control entity.

7. The computer-implemented method of claim 6, wherein the control entity is selected from a group consisting of a user name, a country code, a region, and a organization.

8. The computer-implemented method of claim 1, wherein the pattern contains a set of attributes that each have a name/value pair.

9. The computer-implemented method of claim 1, wherein the search request contains a second pattern having a set of attributes, and wherein the retrieved information is further associated with the set of attributes contained in the second pattern.

10. The computer-implemented method of claim 1, wherein the set of attributes contained in the pattern includes attributes selected from a group consisting of a symptom type, a status, a validation category, a priority type, and a priority level.

5 11. The computer-implemented method of claim 1, wherein the knowledge base is selected from a group consisting of a problem knowledge base, a solution knowledge base, and a business partner knowledge base.

12. A computer-implemented method for building a request to search for information in a knowledge base, the method comprising:

obtaining a search strategy that is associated with the knowledge base; and

using the search strategy to build a pattern having a set of attributes to be used when searching for information in the knowledge base, such that the information is associated with the set of attributes in the pattern.

13. The computer-implemented method of claim 12, wherein the search strategy is associated with one or more control entities.

14. The computer-implemented method of claim 13, wherein the control entities are each selected from a group consisting of a user name, a country code, a region, and a organization.

15. The computer-implemented method of claim 12, wherein the pattern contains a set of attributes that each have a name/value pair.

16. The computer-implemented method of claim 12, wherein the method further comprises:

using the search strategy to build a second pattern having a set of attributes to be used when searching for information in the knowledge base, such that the information is associated with the set of attributes in the pattern and also with the set of attributes in the second pattern.

17. The computer-implemented method of claim 12, wherein the set of attributes contained in the pattern includes attributes selected from a group consisting of a symptom type, a status, a validation category, a priority type, and a priority level.

18. The computer-implemented method of claim 12, wherein the knowledge base is selected from a group consisting of a problem knowledge base, a solution knowledge base, and a business partner knowledge base.

19. A computer-readable medium having computer-executable instructions contained therein for performing a method, the method comprising:

building a search request that contains a search query and a pattern having a set of attributes; and

using the search request to retrieve information from a knowledge base, wherein the retrieved information contains information associated with the search query, and wherein the retrieved information is also associated with the set of attributes contained in the pattern.

20. A computer-readable medium having computer-executable instructions contained therein for performing a method, the method comprising:

obtaining a search strategy that is associated with a knowledge base; and

using the search strategy to build a pattern having a set of attributes to be used when searching for information in the knowledge base, such that the information is associated with the set of attributes in the pattern.

21. A computer system for retrieving information from a knowledge base, the computer system being programmed to:

build a search request that contains a search query and a pattern having a set of attributes; and

5 use the search request to retrieve information from the knowledge base, wherein the retrieved information contains information associated with the search query, and wherein the retrieved information is also associated with the set of attributes contained in the pattern.

22. A computer system for building a request to search for information in a knowledge base, the computer system being programmed to:

obtain a search strategy that is associated with the knowledge base; and

use the search strategy to build a pattern having a set of attributes to be used when searching for information in the knowledge base, such that the information is associated with the set of attributes in the pattern.